

THE STORY  
OF THE CARAFFA



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The story of the Caraffa









THE STORY OF THE CARAFFA

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THE  
STORY OF THE CARAFFA

“THE PONTIFICATE OF PAUL IV.  
“WITH ALL THAT FOLLOWED AFTER  
“HIS DEATH IN THE PONTIFICATE  
“OF PIUS IV., TOGETHER WITH THE  
“DEATHS INFLICTED UPON HIS  
“NEPHEWS AND THE EXTIRPATION  
“OF THE PAPAL BRANCH OF THE  
“HOUSE OF CARAFFA”

TRANSLATED FROM  
AN ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT WRITTEN ABOUT 1640-1650  
FORMERLY IN THE COLLECTION OF THE SYNDIC  
ENRICO NOLLI OF NAPLES

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*

BY  
ROBERT C. JENKINS, M.A.

RECTOR OF LYMINGE AND HONORARY CANON OF CANTERBURY

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# THE STORY OF THE CARAFFA.



## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THE story or rather "Tragedy of the Caraffa"—as it was described by the Duke of Florence, who, having assisted in its *dénouement*, suddenly left Rome that he might not witness the terrible catastrophe—has in every later period presented to the historian a mystery of crime and retribution, and a contrast of grandeur and ignominy, insoluble and inexplicable by the ordinary processes of historical investigation, and with the imperfect materials out of which the annals of the papacy have hitherto been constructed. The new sources of information which have now been fortunately

opened in Rome, by the transfer of the civil and criminal archives of the State to the Government of Italy, and the vast treasures which the great papal houses possess, relating to the history of the three past centuries, and which they have so generously made available to the public, have thrown a new light upon the history of Italy; while the relations of the ambassadors of France, Spain, Tuscany, and Venice have presented us with materials for it of the most authentic and contemporary character.

Nor has the modern historian been unequal to the duty now laid upon him, nor unworthy of the privilege thus given him of rewriting from documentary evidence the history of this eventful period. Commencing with the great Ranke—who, however, began his work in the very opening of the new era, and before the Archivio Criminale and the treasures of the Borghese, the Corsini, the Casanata, the Barberini, and other princely libraries were so

freely opened to the public,—we have a succession of historians of the papacy, of whom we must be content to name one as especially the historian of the reign of the Caraffa, M. George Duruy. His life of Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, which covers the most eventful half-century of the papal history of modern times (1519–1564), may be briefly described as a triumph of scientific research ; for, in the present day, history, from being a mere chronological record and a field of ingenious conjecture or oratorical display, has taken its place among the exact sciences.

M. Duruy describes in bright and vivid language the fascination which he experienced from the study of a period so full of the most startling events and sudden contrasts. A manuscript containing the process against the two nephews of Paul IV. and their execution formed the *point de départ* of his exploration. He happened to be in Rome, in the very scene of the tragedy, and in the midst of the great

libraries which are the depositories of its voluminous records. His object was less to give a detail of the events of the period as an ordinary history, than to bring out the strange individuality of Cardinal Caraffa, in all its marked features and wild and sudden contrasts, so as to place before the eye of his reader the perfect picture of a man who had passed before the eyes of all Europe under every possible phase of grandeur and littleness, of glory and ignominy, and, after filling the part of a murderer and a profligate, through the cruel revenge of his enemies and the desertion of the whole world is seen in his last moments rather as a martyr than a malefactor. After describing the terrible chambers under the Castle of St. Angelo, in which successively Cardinal Petrucci, Benvenuto Cellini, Cardinal Caraffa, Beatrice Cenci, and hundreds of remarkable characters, both criminal and innocent, have been immured, M. Duruy observes:—  
“The sergeant who serves as guide to the

visitors recounts, in his fashion, with a thousand anachronisms, a thousand strange ornaments, the death of 'poor Cardinal Caraffa.' The old soldier," he continues, "believes in his innocence as in that of Beatrice. He insists that the unfortunate man perished as the victim of some bad pope, and does not dissemble his suspicion that it was 'Pope Borgia' who committed this wicked action."\*

It is not too much to say that until the recent publication of the archives of Rome and Venice, and, above all, of the narratives of Navagero and Nores, the Venetian envoys to the Vatican, and of the "Legations" of Averardo Serristori, the envoy of Tuscany to the same court, the papal historians have committed as many anachronisms, and displayed almost as much ignorance as this sentimental guide.

And at this point it may not unreasonably

\* Duruy, "Le Cardinal Carlo Carafa," p. 338. Paris, 1883.

be asked, why, in the presence of all these new witnesses, and with a history so exhaustive and graphic as that of M. Duruy, the writer of these lines has endeavoured to exhibit to the English public, in a far less perfect form, the principal features of this stirring narrative. Had he attempted this in any original form, or ventured upon the difficult task of condensing the narrative of M. Duruy, he could at best have offered the reader but a few dried leaves of the crown which the French Academy has placed so deservedly upon the work of its distinguished member. But the narrative of which a translation is here presented to the public is an early and original summary of the history of the Caraffa pontificate, and belongs to the early part of the seventeenth century—a period sufficiently near to the events it relates to save it from those dangers of exaggeration and romance to which the tragedy of the Cenci, which so soon succeeded the fall of the Caraffa, was ex-

posed, and which invested a hideous murderess with the character of a beautiful martyr ; \* and equally distant from the bitter controversy between the enemies and the friends of the Caraffa which survived during the reigns of Pius IV. and V., and which give so many varieties of complexion to the narratives of Palavicini, Panvinus, Ciaconius, Palatius, Eggs, and others—not to speak of the professed panegyrists of Paul IV., Pius IV., Pius V. and Paul V., viz. Caracciolo, Goubau, and others. These writers, from their very precarious standpoint of the almost impeccability of the papacy, are content to cover with indiscriminate applause the guilty abdication of the government of the Church and State in favour of his nephews, by Paul IV., resumed too late for the redemption of either from ruin and misery,—

\* The student of the Cenci history will be at once painfully disappointed and amply rewarded by the masterly exposure of the pseudo-biographers of the unfortunate Francesco Cenci, by Signor Bertolotti, in his work, “ Francesco Cenci e la sua Famiglia.”

the cruel and implacable persecution of the Caraffa by Pius IV., who put to death the very friend who had raised him to the papacy, and with an almost oriental cruelty extinguished at a blow the chief historical branch of one of the most illustrious families of Europe,—and, finally, the rehabilitation of the whole race by Pius V., and the translation of the bodies of men whom his predecessor had buried as criminals, “*con vilissima pompa*” (as our manuscript declares), to the Church of Sta. Maria Sopra Minerva, “*con pompa addattata al loro grado.*” It must appear to every unprejudiced mind that the panegyrics with which the papal historians have crowned these conflicting proceedings are even more inconsistent than the acts they so doubtfully adorn.

Between these incoherent authorities the anonymous author of our manuscript takes a position of impartiality and moderation which could only be assumed by one whose object was rather to describe the chief scenes of the tragedy

than to take up the *rôle* of any of the actors in it. From the number of moral sentiments with which his narrative is interspersed, his object seems throughout rather to have been to "point a moral," than to "adorn a tale." These have been for the most part omitted in the translation, as needless interruptions of the history. Though the writer has withheld his name for reasons which must be obvious to the reader, and which derive additional weight from the danger attaching to every opinion which might be held injurious to the papacy, or libellous—for a libel by a law of Pius V. was punishable with death,—it is clear that he was able to have recourse to traditional testimony as well as to contemporary documents. For the traditions of these scenes of horror must have cast their shadows over more generations than that which actually witnessed them, and would especially have survived in Naples, where from internal evidence the manuscript appears to have been written.

Probably until it came into the possession of Signor Bocca, the eminent Roman bookseller, from whom the writer procured it, it had never left its birthplace. It was bought by him at the sale of the library of the Syndic Enrico Nolli of Naples, in 1875 ; \* and is written upon fine paper of a quarto size, the watermark being the Royal Neapolitan arms. From the manner in which the Seggio di Nido and other localities in Naples are mentioned, it would seem addressed to those who were well acquainted with that city, and with its principal families. In this it resembles the great genealogical work of Aldimari, on the Caraffa family, which was published in Naples, and was evidently com-

\* I have vainly endeavoured to trace the history of this manuscript beyond its latest possessor. The Syndic Nolli died without leaving any descendants, and all his effects were sold. Signor Bocca, who made vain inquiries in this direction, writes : " Rien n'existe plus de la famille Nolli ; le dernier de ce nom est mort sans enfants, et tout a été vendu." The manuscript has the mark " N. IV." burnt in on the cover, but besides this there is no indication of authorship or earlier possessors.

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piled for Neapolitans. It does not appear that that voluminous writer, who has filled three folio volumes with his genealogical and historical researches, had any knowledge of our manuscript, which must have been written some fifty years before he compiled his work in 1691. Still more evident is it that it was written by a pious Roman Catholic, who, though not attempting to effect a reconciliation between the pope who executed the Caraffa and his successor who rehabilitated them, does justice to both, and while, giving Paul IV. credit for all the good which he did in the last year of his pontificate, and declaring his horror at the insults heaped upon his memory after his death, does not dissemble the errors and weaknesses of his character, which some of his biographers have, perhaps, too severely judged. His strong reprobation of the base ingratitude of Pius IV. towards Cardinal Caraffa, which M. Duruy has followed up in language even of stronger condemnation, and, still more, his

vindication of the character of Cardinal Alfonso Caraffa, whom his contemporaries had too readily assumed guilty of the charges made against him by Pius IV., whom M. Duruy appears to follow, prove that his leaning (if in any direction) was towards the Caraffa, and thus indicates anew his Neapolitan origin.

On reading the work of M. Duruy, the writer was remarkably impressed with the proofs it gave almost at every point of the accuracy of the author of the manuscript. That he had consulted some of the records of the Vatican is indicated by his reference to the manuscripts of Cardinal Bellay, which are there preserved. A reference in one place to Ciaconius (the first edition of whose *Lives of the Cardinals* was published in 1601) proves that he had seen that work, unless his allusion is to some earlier unpublished writing of the same author. In the terrible scenes he describes at Gallese, he introduces us to an incident which is not mentioned in any other document which has come to the

knowledge of the writer, viz. the murder of Diana Brancaccio by the Duke of Palliano, which immediately succeeded that of Capece. It does not appear to have been included in the indictment as given by contemporary writers and recorded in the Archivio Criminale. There can be no doubt, however, that our author derived it from authentic sources, and it is probable that the Montebello family (to whose circle the wretched victim belonged) was as eager to hide the guilt of their relative as the prosecutors were willing to suppress an unnecessary article in their voluminous indictment.

At the same moment in which the work of M. Duruy came to the knowledge of the writer, the interesting information transpired that the present learned and liberal pope has confided to Count Francesco Cristoferi the important charge of publishing from the secret archives of the Vatican various historical documents, including some which throw special light upon the process against Cardinal Caraffa, among them the diaries

of Massarelli and Firmano. These, however, appear to have been already consulted by Palavicini, who also had access, of which he freely availed himself, to the precious Borghese manuscripts which (from the father of Paul V. having been the advocate of Cardinal Caraffa in the trial) are richer even than the Vatican in documents bearing upon this history. There are many other reasons which lead to the conviction that not even a single additional side-light can now be thrown upon the action or actors in the Caraffa drama. Pius V. ordered the destruction of all the original acts of the process against the Caraffa after the proceedings of their rehabilitation had been completed.\* A copy, however, of the acts exists still in the Archivio Criminale, in Rome (A.D. 1560), and this has been taken advantage of by M. Duruy. As it extends to 1177 pages, its exhaustive character may be well imagined. It may be, therefore, safely assumed that nothing which may yet be discovered in the

\* *Vide* Duruy, "Notice sur les Sources," p. xv.

Archivio Segreto of the Vatican can contribute more than corroborative evidence to the tragic events which have so perfect a record in M. Duruy's pages, and which the manuscript here translated confirms in every particular. The list of his authorities, both published and manuscript, fills nearly thirty closely printed pages, and covers every event of the public life of Cardinal Caraffa.

It may be added in regard to the simple narrative here presented to the reader, that it agrees in all its main features with the papal historians—Ciaconius, Palatius, Eggs, and others. The ampler details in regard to the murders may have been obtained from unpublished and even traditional sources, for the writer was living within the memories of the period, and when many who had witnessed the tragedy might have been yet surviving. For Cardinal Antonio Caraffa died as late as 1588, and Cardinal Decio Caraffa, who resided without intermission in his archbishopric at Naples, lived until 1616. Many of the written

records of the family, including the letters of the Duke and of the Cardinal during their imprisonment, are said to have perished, or at least had fallen into other hands. For Pius V. by a *motus proprius*, dated April 16, 1566, requires the purchasers and possessors by any other claim of the effects of Cardinal Caraffa and the Duke of Palliano—"robbe, *scritture*, e danari"—to surrender them to his commissioner, Altoviti. If any of the "writings" were thus recovered, it is probable that they are now in the Vatican archives; for the Duke of Maddalona courteously informed a friend of the writer that a portion of the manuscripts belonging to the family had found a resting-place in that vast repository. In any case this independent narrative, written by one who was evidently well acquainted with the history and traditions of the Caraffa, cannot be uninteresting or uninformative to the reader who has no time for mastering the exhaustive political and historical work of M. Duruy, and grasping the events of

the period in their full proportions and more intricate relations.

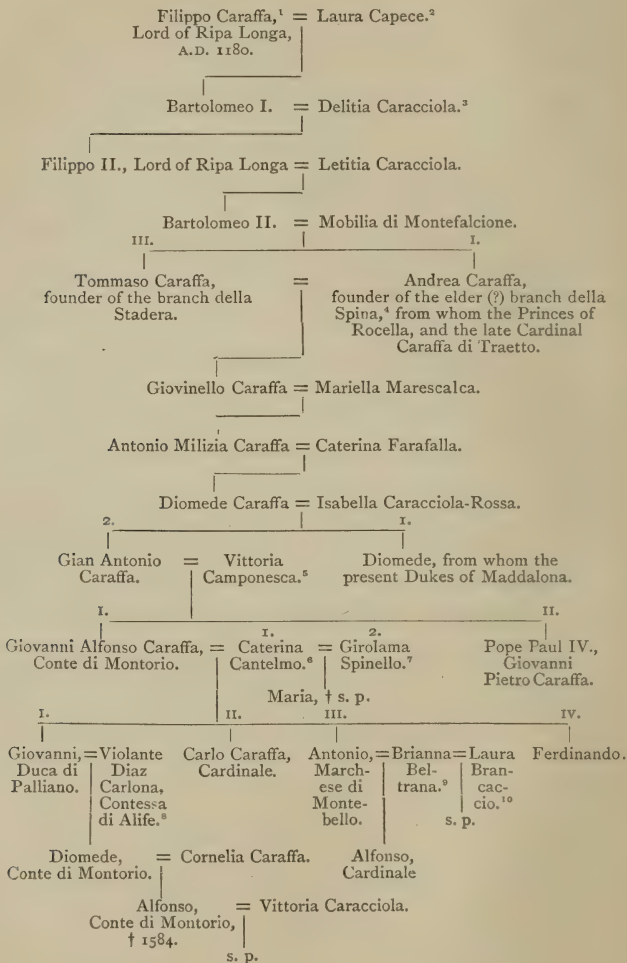
Before these few introductory lines are closed, a short description of the origin and earlier history of the illustrious family to which they refer may not be unacceptable to the reader. Don Biagio Aldimari, who has given us in three folio volumes the fruits of thirty years' labour devoted to the history of the house of Caraffa in root and branch, has yet been unable to clear up its origin, which is lost like that of most of the ancient families of Europe in the dim twilight of the Middle Ages, and does not until the close of the twelfth century come into the light of authentic history. He carries it through several generations of imaginary Kings of Sardinia, of whose very existence there is no clear proof. That the family originated from a branch of the Sigismondi family of Pisa was the tradition accepted by Paul IV. himself, on the authority of an old chronicler, Giovanni Buonincontri (Duruy, p. 2). But the conflicting

theories recorded by Aldimari of the origin of the Caraffa, and the many romantic legends which have been woven between the slender threads of their traditional history are evidently as destitute of proof as they are inconsistent with each other.

A family, however, which had numbered in its genealogy, even in the seventeenth century, one pope, twelve cardinals, thirty-six archbishops and bishops (ten of Naples alone), a grand master of the knights of Malta, and dukes, counts, grandees of Spain and knights of the Golden Fleece without number, and which even in the fifteenth century could boast of four royal quarterings, might well dispense with more distant and doubtful honours. In the manifold genealogical tree, which illustrates the first volume of Aldimari's work, we find that all the branches of the present Caraffa family come from the single root of Philip, Lord of Ripa Longa in 1180, from whose successors the house divided itself into two main branches—the

Caraffa della Spina, who place in their arms a sprig of thorn across the three bars (argent) of their original coat, and the branch from which sprang the Dukes of Maddalona and the Counts of Montorio, called, by Aldimari, the Caraffa della Stadera. From the younger branch of the subdivided stem sprang, in the early part of the sixteenth century, two brothers—Giovanni Alfonso Caraffa, Count of Montorio, and Giovanni Pietro Caraffa, afterwards Pope Paul IV., whose sons and nephews constitute the chief actors in the following narrative.

In order that the reader may trace at a glance the relationship between the members of the papal branch of the family, we will here give the pedigree as deduced from the earliest authentic ancestor :—



<sup>1</sup> The name is variously spelt Carafa, Caraffa, Carrafa; in the manuscript it is always written Caraffa, though the present family adopt the Carafa form. Cardinal Caraffa and his brother used both forms indiscriminately.

<sup>2</sup> The Capece family was one of the most ancient and illustrious in the kingdom of Naples. It numbered among its members fourteen cardinals, five archbishops of Naples, and numerous princes and nobles, and carries back its pedigree nine hundred years. The branch called Di Nido included in its members the Marcello Capece of this history. (Aldimari, tom. iii. p. 225.)

<sup>3</sup> The Caracciolo family, in its three branches of Rossa, Pisquita, and Bianca, were perhaps the most illustrious and celebrated both in ancient and modern times of all the Neapolitan nobility. The Caraffa are by some supposed to have sprung from them, and the names were united in the earliest history of both houses, but only through an intermarriage, as Aldimari clearly proves. They are said to have had a Greek origin.

<sup>4</sup> There is some difficulty in determining which of the two main branches is really the elder. Aldimari decides the question without sufficient proof. The adoption of the difference in their arms (the thorn) would seem to give heraldic proof that they were younger than the branch which bore the Caraffa coat without any such addition. The Duke of Maddalona claims (apparently with good reason) the headship of the Caraffa della Stadera.

<sup>5</sup> The Camponesca family, descended from Lallo Camponeschi (1347), were said to have derived their origin from the Emperors of Germany. Vittoria Camponesca is said to have been as eminent for her virtues as for her nobility.

<sup>6</sup> The Cantelmi claimed descent from the ancient kings of Scotland, whose arms (without the tressure) they bear. The claim was recognized in later days by Charles II. This was one of the four royal quarterings claimed by the Duke of Palliano.

<sup>7</sup> The Spinelli were also of great antiquity in Naples. Girolama Spinelli was the daughter of the Count of Castrovillar, the eldest of the five branches of the family.

<sup>8</sup> The Diaz Carlona family were from Catalonia, and came to Naples in 1462. They were made Counts of Alife in 1484. The mother of Violante was Cornelia Piccolomini, her grandmother the beautiful Violante Grappina.

<sup>9</sup> The Beltrana family was of Spanish origin, claiming royal descent. They came into Italy in the fifteenth century.

<sup>10</sup> The Brancaccio family was second to none in the kingdom of Naples in its antiquity and dignity. The Neapolitan branch had four principal divisions: the Brancaccio Imbriachi, del Vescovo, del Cardinale and del Gliuolo. The Dukes of Brancas, in France, were of the same family, which claimed as one of its members St. Baculus, Bishop of Sorrento in 660.

A romantic story attaches to the arms of the family, which Aldimari treats as mythical, but which may have an historical interpretation.

The three bars of silver upon a field of red are said to have been derived from an ancestor who fell in battle while fighting for the Emperor of Germany. The emperor is said to have drawn his three fingers across the bloody stain of the harness of the warrior, and to have exclaimed, "O ! cara fè !" from which the family name is alleged to have originated.

This story may be so far true as to indicate the fact that the family came into Naples on its conquest by the emperors, as northern knights in his service—a conquest which is in exact correspondence, in point of date, with the period in which the name first appears in authentic history, viz. 1140, in which the first Lord of Ripa Longa flourished. The arms point rather to a Norman than an Italian origin, and the name Sigismondi is evidently an Italianized form of Siegmund, as Odescalchi is of Gottschalck, and Aldobrandini of Hildebrand.

The reader may be here introduced to one or two of the localities which find special mention in the following narrative. Of these the "Seggio di Nido" is the most frequently mentioned, and needs the clearest explanation. Among the most interesting relics of the ancient Greek colony of Naples are the "seggi," as they are termed. They were, as the great Neapolitan historian, Giannone, writes ("Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli," l. xx., c. iv.), "particular districts in the city, for the most part near the gates, where the noble families congregated together for social intercourse and union, for pleasant converse among themselves, and for conferring on public affairs and matters of private interest. They represented the *phratriæ* of the Greeks, and were anciently four in number, called the quarters of Capuano (so called from its vicinity to the road to Capua), of Forcella (a name of doubtful origin), of Montagna (called from its situation in the higher part of the city), and the Seggio di Nido, a corruption of Nilo,

a figure representing the Nile having been there in earlier times. Aldimari, when describing the various noble houses in Naples, distinguishes them according to the "seggio" to which they belong. "They enjoy the rights of nobility in the Seggio Capuana," or "in the Seggio di Nido." In this latter were enrolled the Capece, the Caraffa, and other of the families here mentioned. There were in these "seggi" many streets and subdivisions bearing various distinctive appellations. In the reign of Charles I., of Anjou, there were twenty-nine "seggi," which were afterwards reduced to five; that of the "Port," or harbour, of Naples constituting the fifth. The principal "seggi" became the more exclusive property of the noble and rich, and those who were related to the higher nobility; and of these the Seggio di Nido and Capuana became, in a manner, the Faubourg S. Germain, or the Belgravia of Naples.

## CHAPTER I.

## PAUL IV., CARAFFA.

THE pontificate of Paul IV (Caraffa) was full of remarkable incidents; nor did these occur only in his lifetime, but were continued even in the vacancy of the see—inspiring the wonder, not merely of the Sacred College, but of all the representatives of foreign princes and of Rome itself. Giovanni Pietro Caraffa, although sprung from the highest nobility, was of a rough nature and habits of the greatest asperity. When he was preparing for clerical life he came as a young man to Rome, and through the protection and favour of Cardinal Oliverio Caraffa, Archbishop of Naples, he was made secret chamberlain to Alexander VI. (Borgia),

in which post he continued till the pontificate of Julius II. (del Rovere), by whom he was made and declared Bishop of Chieti. Finally he was raised to the dignity of cardinal, by Paul III. (Farnese), and on the 23rd of May, 1555 (the Festival of the Ascension), after the fiercest contentions in the conclave, and when he was in the seventy-ninth year of his age, was created supreme pontiff, and took the name of Paul IV.

An election thus made occasioned the greatest displeasure throughout Rome, which had become already fully acquainted with his harsh nature and severe conduct in the charges he had already filled.

Promoted to the supreme dignity, a vast multitude of his kinsmen betook themselves to Rome, who were all recognized, caressed, and favoured by him; being promoted to various offices, some of an exceptional character. Those of his kindred whom he chiefly distinguished, as nearest to him in consanguinity,

were, Don Giovanni, Don Carlo, and Don Antonio, brothers ; sons of Giovanni Alfonso Caraffa, Count of Montorio, brother of the Pope, and of Caterina Cantelmo, his first wife. The count married, secondly, Girolama Spinello, daughter of the Count of Castrovillar, and had by her an only daughter, named Donna Maria, who, with her mother (the Spinello), now a widow, went also to Rome, to live there with her family.

The pope, according to his custom with all his kinsfolk, advanced them, and changed their former poverty into wealth, distinguishing specially his nephews. Accordingly, Don Giovanni, as the firstborn of the Count of Montorio, he enriched and invested with the dukedom of Palliano, abounding in lands and castles, and situated in the Campagna di Roma, having wrested it from Marco Antonio Colonna, who was its lord and patron. Don Carlo he suddenly created a Cardinal and Legate in Bologna, giving into his hands all the affairs of the

government and the papacy ; while Don Antonio, who was married to Laura Brancaccio (his second wife), he enriched with the marquisate of Montebello, also rich in lands and castles, having, under the pretext of his contumacy to the Church, deprived the Count of Bagni of his lawful inheritance in it. Maria, the daughter of the Spinello (the second wife of his brother Don Giovanni), and who was a girl of nine years of age, he destined as wife to Francis the Dauphin of France, son of Henry II. And as her dowry, he invested her with the kingdom of Naples, devolved (as he alleged) to the Holy See, with the obligation to redeem it from the hands of the King of Spain, its legitimate sovereign, at the expense of the Community. It is believed that this marriage would have certainly come about, had not death, envious of the felicity of mortals, removed prematurely from the world the youthful Maria. The Dauphin took to wife afterwards, another Maria, of the family of the Stuarts, Queen of Scotland.

Paul IV. had been always an opposer and enemy of the Emperor Charles V., and he had given such clear proofs of this that the emperor was forced, from the time when he was cardinal, to refuse him the possession of the Church of Chieti, and further to declare him an enemy of the imperial crown; and, in consequence of this repute, he had directed the cardinals of his faction to exclude him from the papacy, and to manage so that the other cardinals might not give him their votes. But Paul, having penetrated this design, dissembled with the cardinals, who were in discord and even in open rupture with one another, and were so disorganized that he was eventually brought in. The cardinals who disobeyed the emperor produced reasons showing the grounds which led them to create him pope; but they were severely reprehended and received a mortifying reply.

The cardinals very speedily repented that they had placed upon the seat of Peter the

aforesaid pontiff—not only on account of the complaints which their action had occasioned from the emperor, but also because Paul had no sooner taken upon him the grave charge of the supreme pontificate than he gave the clearest signs of his inordinate affection towards his nephews, by suddenly aggrandizing them. He also began to treat with the greatest secrecy with the French, at that time enemies of the emperor, and to blame publicly all his acts, calling him continually a fautor of heretics and schismatics.\*

On the other hand, the ambassador of the emperor felt at liberty to publicly treat with certain cardinals, adherents of the emperor, at the house of the Cardinal of Santa Fiora, on the

\* He was even still more incontinent of tongue in regard to the Spaniards, towards whom (as a Neapolitan) he bore a hatred of the most virulent character. He was accustomed to call them “vili, abietti, seme di Giudei e feccia del mondo” (Navagero e Nores, ap. “Serristori Legazioni,” p. 338). Publicly and in the presence of the cardinals, he encouraged the people of Rome to rise up against them and revile them as “cani, marrani, e traditori” (Id. *ibid.*)

convocation of a council to depose Paul IV.\* At this meeting other ministers and persons indebted to the emperor were present; and when the circumstance was discovered by the pope, he remonstrated with the cardinals in question, and among them with the cardinal-chamberlain. As, however, the latter did not discontinue his attendance at these meetings, he was confined in the Castle of St. Angelo.

The ambassador becoming acquainted with his incarceration, immediately went to the pope to urge the reasons for restoring him to liberty, not only as the friend and servant of the emperor, but as living under his own protection. But the pope would not consent, and revealed to the cardinals certain offensive and detestable heads of the conspiracy.

\* This "Cardinal of Santa Fiora," was Guido Ascanio Sforza, son of the Count of Santa Fiora, by Constantia Farnese, an illegitimate daughter of Pope Paul III. The proposed deposition of Paul IV. was rather an inquiry into the legality of his election, which was alleged to have been brought about by violence and fraud. (Duruy, p. 38.)

The partisans of the emperor, seeing themselves deprived of their head and principal leader of their meetings, the Cardinal-Chamberlain of Santa Fiora, elected in his place Marco Antonio Colonna, who planned and exerted himself to raise the public so as to occasion tumults, of which the first movements appeared. But Cardinal Caraffa discovered to the pope the machinations that were going on ; and convinced his uncle that, if he did not come to an open rupture with the Colonna and the ministers of the emperor, he would never have any peace, and therefore advised him to avail himself of the force of the French.

Paul was not eager to come into open war with the emperor, considering the very serious evils and disadvantages that would accrue to the estates of the Church and to his subjects through the heavy impositions which it would be necessary to lay upon them. But Cardinal Caraffa removed his difficulties, and convinced his uncle of the great benefits that would arise

to the Church and to his own house if by such a league with the French he should succeed in acquiring the kingdom of Naples, the province of Sicily and the States of Milan, so eagerly desired by the King of France. The insinuations of the cardinal had such effect, that he induced the pope to make this league, and Annibale Rucellai, the secretary of Cardinal Caraffa, was expedited with letters and instructions to the most Christian king. The cardinal himself followed him, bearing with him the heads of agreement which had been drawn up between the pope and the French cardinals.

When the confederacy between the pope and the King of France was made public, the imperial ambassador complained of it to the pontiff, and demanded permission to depart from Rome. But before his departure an incident occurred which brought great disturbance to the pope. The ambassador wishing to leave by the gate of St. Agnes with all his suite at sunrise, and finding it closed like the

other gates of the city, on account of suspected persons, as the guard would not transgress orders, had recourse to violence, and ordered his soldiers to break open the gate, which they did, forcing the bolts, and he thus went out his own way.

When this came to the knowledge of the pope, it caused him such annoyance, that, on his nephews urging him to show a becoming resentment, he refused admittance to all the imperial ministers, and hastened precipitately into open resolutions of reprisal and revenge. In token of this he ordered Marco Antonio Colonna to be apprehended and placed in the Castle of St. Angelo ; but not being able to find him, deprived him of all his possessions, including the Duchy of Palliano, which he conferred on his nephew, Don Giovanni Caraffa, general of the Holy Church, to whom he gave the title of Duke of Palliano. He took from him also all the goods he possessed in the States of the Church and in Rome itself.

Marco Antonio, flying to Naples, threw himself into the arms of the Duke of Alva, and was joined by the ambassador, who announced the treaty which the pope had made with the French, and also that twenty thousand Gascons and twelve standards had arrived from France. When the Viceroy of Naples heard this, he instantly declared war against the pope, who made thereupon a levy of twenty thousand men in the States of the Church, and sent one of his secret chamberlains as envoy to the Duke of Urbino, and Don Leonardo de Cardines to the Duke of Ferrara, to invite them both to enter into the league, which, in order to show their adherence to the pope, they did. They were included accordingly in the capitulations with the King of France, and put under arms fifteen thousand men.

The pope established in Rome six divisions of Italian soldiers, and ordered the fortification of Palliano, which he had lately taken from Marco Antonio, and of the walls of Rome.

The French soldiers joined him under the command of the Duke of Guise, generalissimo of the King of France in Italy; while Cardinal Caraffa, having returned from France, as though he were the bravest of captains, and an expert in military art, issued the most precise orders for the distribution of the force.\*

The Duke of Alva, on his part, gathered together an army of Spaniards, Neapolitans, and Italians, and placed them under the charge of Marco Antonio Colonna, declaring him general of the army. He advanced with twelve thousand men to the frontier of the kingdom, and entered the States of the Church, coming

\* Count Luigi Serristori, in his introduction to the "Legation" of his ancestor Averardo Serristori to Paul IV., describes the ruin and misery inflicted upon Rome and the Papal States by these preparations. The destruction of all the buildings which interrupted his plans included, "case private, palazzi, chiese, ville, vigne, dentro e fuori della Città." Among these was the "grand and famous church of Santa Maria del Popolo, with its convent and about a hundred houses around it." The value of these buildings was estimated at 300,000 scudi.—("Serristori Legazioni," p. 342).

thus into open conflict with the Papalins. The fortunes of the war were varied, for the Duke of Guise, having had some controversy with Don Giovanni Caraffa during the defence of Itri, the Duke of Alva was able to scour the lands of the Church, and gained many places which the Orsini and other commanders were unable to recover, Marco Antonio being master of all the States of the March, and the Captain Berardi of other places of importance. Thus the victorious viceroy advanced with his army to the very gates of Rome, and the pope, stimulated by the cardinals and barons of Rome, sent to the army of the Duke of Alva two principal cardinals, and afterwards even the cardinal his nephew, to treat of peace. For the French army was worsted by the Spaniards with the loss of its artillery and all its baggage, while the Papalins complained of their insufferable expense, endured through the imposition by the pope of two per cent. upon all the real property of the Roman princes and barons.

A capitulation was agreed upon at Grottaferrata, between the Duke of Alva and Cardinal Caraffa as plenipotentiary of the pope, with the restitution of all the lands; but there was not included in it the restitution of Palliano to Marco Antonio Colonna, nor his reception by the pope—though in another secret capitulation Cardinal Caraffa bound himself in the name of the pope, his uncle, to restore Palliano to the Colonna, himself receiving as a recompense two States in the kingdom of Naples, viz. Oderisi and Francavilla.

When peace had been concluded, the people remained embittered, dejected, and in a miserable state, in proof of which they were on the point of revenging their wrongs on the nephews of the pope, and particularly on Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, who was considered to be the author of this war. The cardinal, on this account, was in constant suspicion of being betrayed by the Spanish and imperial ministers, and on every least indication betook

himself to the pope, in order to keep him always inflamed against those nations ; and when the Abate Nanni, a paid emissary of the Spaniards, arrived in Rome, the cry was raised that he had come to plot against the life of Cardinal Caraffa. The cardinal hereupon caused him to be imprisoned in the Castle of St. Angelo ; and his death being occasioned in consequence, the Spaniards made much disturbance, and by order of Philip II., king of Spain, complained loudly to the pope. The cardinal thereupon, in order to free himself from any sinister attempt which might be made against him on this account, ordered that no minister should be admitted to the presence of the pope without his permission—which occasioned the greatest inconveniences and the wildest reports.

The pope now no longer governed ; but the three brothers, his nephews. For Don Giovanni (now called the Duke of Palliano), the Cardinal Carlo, and the Marquis of Montebello ruled in

despotic form the pontificate of their uncle—the first being declared General of the Holy Church, the second the absolute arbiter of the will of the pontiff, while the third was made Captain of the Guards of the Palace.

Meantime the loudest outcries resounded through the whole States of the Church against the excesses, the tyrannies, and the injustice which were everywhere experienced. But to these cries of an oppressed people justice was not rendered ; nor was there any enormity of crime which was not perpetrated by the Caraffa or by their direction. Not even in their own houses the property or even the honour of matrons and of young women was secure. Monasteries and sacred places were robbed of their riches ; monks and virgins consecrated to God were dishonoured ; and, lest such enormities should come to the ears of their uncle, directions were given to the chamberlains, who were their creatures and dependents, to give no admittance for an audience of the pope to

any person, of whatever state or degree he might be, unless he bore and gave up to the chamberlains an order written either by the duke or by the cardinal.

The duke had been married for many years to Violante Diaz Carlona, a Neapolitan lady of Seggio di Nido, though of Spanish origin ; sister of Ferrante Diaz Carlona, Count of Alife. She was a most beautiful and graceful woman, and by her he had a son named Diomedes, who bore the title of Duke of Cavi. The duke maintained a splendid court, whose members were all qualified for their places by birth. He was waited on by gentlemen and chamberlains from Seggio, and of these the dearest to him was Marcello Capece, a gentleman of Seggio, a handsome young man, and graceful in all his ways. The duchess, on her part, was served in the noblest manner, and among the dearest of her ladies was Diana Brancaccio, related to the Marchioness of Montebello, as also Cornelia di Gennaro ; but her favourite, to whom she con-

fided the most hidden secrets of her heart, was Brancaccio

Capece, meantime, was ardently enamoured with the duchess his mistress, but yet dared not to disclose his passion, considering the quality and, as far as outward appearances indicated, the honourable character of the duchess. Nevertheless he continued to meditate how he might, at least, gain her favour, and thus perhaps some day attain the object of his desire. Although he saw that the duchess was constantly indignant with the duke for his neglect of her, and on account of his repeated intrigues now with one and now with another of his dependents, whom he brought almost to her very chamber, he did not for all this venture to discover his affection, but continued to serve her and to honour her the more, so that the duchess perceived at once the love he had conceived for her, and which resulted in his deep disgrace, as we shall see hereafter.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE BANISHMENT FROM ROME.

IT happened at this time, while the nephews of Paul were committing the many atrocities and crimes we have already described, that an ecclesiastic (*religioso*),\* who used to assist the pope in the recitation of the daily service and other prayers, became the medium of discovering to him the excesses and enormities committed formerly, and carried on by them to that very day,—the grievous disorders they had caused, and the ill-will they had engendered in the public by their wicked and outrageous

\* Our author mentions him afterwards as the Bishop of Bergamo. This was without doubt Aloysius Lipomannus, who succeeded to the bishopric in 1558, and perhaps was promoted on this occasion. He filled an important part at the Council of Trent, under Pius IV.

proceedings. The pontiff was astounded, and almost beside himself on hearing the relation of the ecclesiastic, and could not bring himself to give full credence to it, as it seemed impossible that his nephews could be capable of such wickedness. Nevertheless his suspicions were aroused, and these suspicions soon passed into a clear knowledge of the truth of what had been told him. For he got to know from his old friend and confidant, Bongiovanni Gianfigliacci,\* even more than what the ecclesiastic had informed him of. Among other things he told him that the Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, his nephew, had appeared dressed as a secular at a banquet given in the house of the Cavaliere Lanfranco,†

\* Gianfigliacci was the envoy of the Duke of Florence, and is said by the contemporary historians to have been rudely excluded from the Vatican by Cardinal Caraffa, but to have forced his way into the presence of the pope. This statement is quite consistent with the assertion that he was a private friend of the pope; otherwise he could have hardly broken through the barrier which the cardinal had raised to exclude every visitor.

† Lanfranco (or Lanfranchi, as he is called by Nores) was secretary to the Duke of Palliano.

in order to wait upon a lady protected by him, with whom the cardinal also had an illicit connection. And then he proceeded to open to the pope all the wicked actions and deceits of his nephews. Although Paul IV. loved his nephews most affectionately, for all that, terrified at so great wickednesses, and at the injuries done to the Apostolic Chamber, to the subjects of the Holy Church, and to the Roman people, he put off at once the love which he had entertained for them, having, like a good pastor, more regard to the justice he had to administer, and the honour of God and of His Church, which had been trodden underfoot; and, accordingly, he resolved to remove all of them from the midst.

Cardinal Caraffa, ignorant of all that had been related to the pope his uncle, according to custom came into the presence of the pope, who, the moment he saw him, full of anger and disdain, without giving him time to utter a word, forbade him for the future to appear in his presence, driving him away with words of

severity, and prohibiting him from entering again into the Vatican; and the same prohibition he extended to Don Giovanni Caraffa, and to all his other relations.

When the news of the pope's indignation against his nephews was spread abroad, several cardinals who were friendly to them betook themselves to the palace with the view of calming the enraged pontiff.\* But he hardly saw them before he began to cry out, "Riforma, riforma!" and immediately convoked the Consistory, which was held on the 31st of January in the year 1559. When the cardinals had assembled, he related publicly the cause for which he had called them together; and after he had, with tears in his eyes, enlarged on the deep sorrow which the wicked conduct of his nephews, only just discovered, had occasioned

\* There can be little doubt that Cardinals Farnese and Del Monte are here specially referred to. The former ventured to make an appeal to the pope in behalf of Cardinal Caraffa, but received a rebuff of singular rudeness and almost brutality.

him, he decreed that all his nephews and relations should be exiled from Rome within the term of three days. He deprived the Duke Don Giovanni Caraffa of the generalship of the Church, relegating him to the lands of Soriano and Gallese. He took away from the cardinal every office and government with which he had charged him, and exiled him to the city of Lavinia ; he sent also from Rome, Spinello and the wife of the duke, with their kinsmen, servants, and friends, and ordered the Marquis of Montebello to retire to his estate, together with all his family.\*

The only one who was not included in this exile was the Cardinal Don Alfonso Caraffa, son of the Marquis of Montebello by his former wife, whom the pope wished to keep near his person, as he was a young man adorned with virtuous habits, much esteemed and honoured

\* The marquis 'appears to have been accompanied by his nephew Diomede, who also resided with him when he prudently retired to Naples on the accession of Pius IV.

by all for his excellent conduct. He made afterwards a decree that, during this relegation of five years, no cardinal, prince, or minister of any sovereign should intercede for any grace for them, under pain of his indignation. And Paul IV. continued in this firm and irrevocable determination until his death, reforming everything, and placing new ministers well chosen and creditable for the government of the States of the Church. He published, moreover, a notification for the public benefit, that he would give audience to all persons in order that he might perceive and become acquainted with the wants of the city of Rome, and of the subjects of his States.

The people of Rome, who were in the deepest indignation against the nephews of the pope for their infamous government, exhibited great pleasure and experienced the profoundest consolation at the rigorous action of the pope, and began to entertain better feelings towards him, considering how zealous he was for the honour

of God, and that he had regard to this alone—not pardoning even his nearest blood relations and nephews for sins which many pontiffs had been wont to tolerate. Of so great importance was his action on this occasion that he was deemed heroic, as indeed he truly was.

The nephews, when they had received the rigorous order of their uncle the pope, being forced to obey it, left Rome with all their families, and went to the respective places which were destined for their exile—the cardinal to Cività Lavinia, the marquis and his wife to the estate of Montebello, while the duke, to enjoy greater freedom, separated himself from the ladies of his family, and united his fortunes with the Count of Alife, his kinsman, Don Leonardo de Cardines, and Don Giov. Antonio Toraldo, also his kinsman, through his marriage with Donna Giovanna Caraffa, his sister; and with these and other friends he went to the estate of Soriano. The duchess, meantime, with her ladies and her household, and Giroloma Spinello

with her family, settled in the estate of Gallese, a few miles distant from Soriano,—the duke not failing (as this was not forbidden him) to go from time to time to Gallese to see his wife and step-mother, whom he regarded as his own mother, showing her all respect and reverence. But we pause here in order to return to Rome.

The Roman senators, with the conservators, going before the pope and representing to him that they were burdened with additional taxes and expenses laid on them in the time of the war, the pope heard them with great amazement and wonder, and excused himself on the ground that he had never had any intimation of this grievance. It was not (he said) his intention that such taxes should be imposed; and accordingly he commanded and decreed immediately that the Roman people should be relieved from these, and that they should be compensated for the loss which they had suffered from them. On this the people and conservators of Rome, from their great satisfac-

tion at such a resolution, erected in a saloon of the Capitol, upon a famous pedestal there, a magnificent statue of the pope, sculptured by an excellent artist.\* We shall hear something afterwards of the fate of this statue. With a like liberality, Paul IV. suppressed the other taxes raised in the course of the war. All these demonstrations were made by Paul to cheer and relieve the people, in order that he might bring them back to their loyalty and extinguish the fatal memories of the past war and the miseries and calamities they had suffered from it, and were even now suffering from soldiers still remaining in some places, who kept the Roman people irritated and in a manner agonized.

But while the pope was occupied in these holy and heroic demonstrations as a tender Father, an event occurred in the district of Gallese of a mournful and barbarous nature, which demands a distinct narration.

\* The sculptor was a pupil of Michel Angiolo, and his work is said to have been a very beautiful one (Ciampi, "Innocenzo X.," p. 311).

## CHAPTER III.\*

## THE DUCHESS OF PALLIANO.

“—Quisquis in primo obstitit  
Repulitque amorem tutus ac victor fuit ;  
Qui blandiendo dulce nutrit malum  
Serò recusat ferre quod subiit jugum.”

*Senecæ Hippolytus.*

WHILE these events were passing at Rome, the Duke of Palliano was carrying on at Soriano, with the companions of his previous life, the same course of open profligacy which he had led under the very walls of the Vatican, and it might well be said with the licence and impunity of the pope himself. For the weak

\* This chapter has been compressed and recast with some additions by the translator, only those features which are essential to the narrative having been preserved.

pontiff had given a plenary absolution to Cardinal Caraffa for all the murders and crimes he had committed, and restored him to the state of innocence of his baptism.\* Paul IV., who never seems to have entertained the idea that prevention was better than cure, and that the most terrible revenge was not an atonement for a fatal neglect of duty, in the first vehemence of his wrath rather changed the scene of his nephews' guilt than converted them to a better life. The duke still carried on his infamous course, introducing even to the apartments of his wife the most abandoned women, and placing in her court and around her person at once the most engaging and the most profligate of his companions.

Foremost among these was Marcello Capece, his cousin, a descendant of that ancient Neapolitan house which gave a wife to the

\* This scandalous document is given by Duruy in full, in an appendix to his history of the cardinal. It was produced for the defence in the trial.

first authentic ancestor of the Caraffa. He was the principal actor in the disreputable scene which took place in the house of Lanfranchi, already briefly alluded to. The full description of it is given by the contemporary historian, Nores. It appears that a famous courtesan, by name Martuccia, was a guest at this fatal entertainment. During the supper, Marcello Capece, fully armed with a number of his companions, rushed into the hall, with the object of carrying her off. A wild *melée* ensued which threatened to end in murder, in the midst of which "la Martuccia," as she is called, contrived to make her escape. This incident, as we have already seen, contributed to the disgrace of the duke and cardinal, who had been the chief actors in it.

As though the duke had almost planned the fall of his beautiful and deserted wife, he gave to this same profligate the post of principal gentleman of her household. In any case he had exposed the duchess to the suspicions

which could not fail to be aroused by such an appointment; and in a scene where the jealous vigilance of a step-mother, whose hopes of a royal alliance had been blasted, and whose influence over the duke was paramount, had been awakened, and the solitude of the place and the absence of every other excitement stimulated the envy and rivalry of every member of the exiled community. Marcello Capece was but too fully prepared to take advantage of the wilful and unpardonable indiscretion which had placed him in so tempting a position.

The beauty of the duchess had kindled in him a fatal passion, which the absence of the excitements of his Roman life had rendered irresistible. He watched with eager eye the result which the neglect of the duke and his shameless profligacy had produced in her mind, and determined, when the first opportunity occurred, to take advantage of it. Our manuscript (whose narrative at this point is needlessly minute, and in many places would seem too

revolting to be reproduced in a translated form) gives at some length the words with which he disclosed to the duchess his guilty suggestion. The details were most probably derived from the records of the Archivio Criminale in Rome (An. 1560, M.S. 58), which are so admirably described by M. Duruy in the introduction to his "Life of Cardinal Caraffa." It will be sufficient here to say that Capece opened his dishonourable addresses with the skill of an accomplished seducer, and that the duchess repelled them in the first moment of her surprise with an indignation worthy of a virtuous and high-minded woman.

"And, what," she exclaimed, "have you ever seen in me to lead you to presume to address me as a lover? Have my life and conversation been so loose, so dissolute, so ill-regulated as to lead you to the mere thought that for your sake, or for that of any other man, I should be unfaithful to my own husband? I forgive you for what you have said, because I believe

that you are dreaming and doting ; but beware, lest you suffer yourself to be carried away again by such frenzies, for I swear to you that, woman as I am, I would make you repent of it." With that, she hastened from him, leaving him amazed and confounded, wholly unprepared for such a manifestation of her love to her dissolute husband.

But presently a fatal reaction took place in her mind. "The very disdain of a woman," as our author says, "is often the token of hidden affection." In any case, she saw that he had felt for her—had pitied her ; that an affection which she could not, or perhaps dared not, analyze, had been drawn forth towards her ; and the misery and dejection which he now exhibited were more fatal to her than the words which he had so imprudently addressed to her.

At this juncture, which was the very turning-point of her miserable life, she rashly determined to make a confidant of her favourite Diana

Brancaccio, and to open to her the deepest thoughts of a heart which even then might, by one word of righteous counsel, have been rescued from the dreadful snare into which her own frailty and the guilt of her husband had betrayed her. It happened that Brancaccio had conceived an inordinate passion for a certain Domizio Fornari, the chamberlain of her brother-in-law, the Marquis of Montebello, the younger brother of the duke ; but a marriage with one so far beneath her in rank—for the Brancaccio family vied in antiquity and honours with the Caraffa, the Caracciolo, the Cantelmi, and the other great historic houses of Naples—could not be heard of for a moment. The wily confidante saw at a glance that the influence of the duchess might bring about the great object of her life, and that, by becoming the mistress of an intrigue in her case, she would bind her to the reciprocal service of carrying out her own design. Accordingly, affecting an equal confidence (after too fatally adding fuel to the

flame which had been kindled by Capece), she opened to her patroness her own case, described her devotion to Fornari, and enlisted her influence and co-operation as the promoter of the forbidden marriage, or at least as the encourager of her lover to visit her at Gallese. The fatal compact was made, and a double intrigue carried on, which soon transgressed even the limits of Italian licence in that day of undissembled profligacy.

From time to time the duchess appears to have had brief seasons of repentance and remorse, but they were too transient and intermittent to enable her to retrace her downward path, or to rise from her fatal fall. Brancaccio, on the other hand, who was destitute not only of every religious feeling, but even of the ordinary instincts of womanhood, began, from these and other indications of change in the duchess's mind and conduct, to believe that her part in the ruinous compact was unfulfilled, or, at least, that she was gradually

withdrawing from her engagement. At the same time, she began to discover that her shameless conduct had awakened other feelings than those of love or even respect in the mind of Fornari himself. Her suspicions received what appeared to her to be a complete justification, in the announcement that Fornari had left the service of the Marquis of Montebello, and that he was therefore never likely to return to Gallese. It was indeed too natural that she should impute the shipwreck of all her plans, if not to the active intervention, at least to the neglect and indifference of her patroness. And as revenge was the uppermost thought in the mind of every Italian of that day who had, or believed he had, a grievance, she resolved to wield against the unfortunate duchess the two-edged weapon which she had so long sheathed in an ominous silence. Covering her terrible resolve with the veil of a more devoted service, and dissembling her plan till the most favourable opportunity occurred, she contrived

to surprise Marcello Capece in the chamber of the duchess at midnight, bringing with her, as the witnesses of his guilt and of her own treachery, Giroloma Spinello and the ladies of her court, summoned from their distant wing of the palace to take part in this shameless manœuvre.

Great was the terror and amazement of the duchess at a nocturnal visit so startling and, at first sight, so unaccountable. To be suddenly confronted in her own private apartments by the whole suite of her step-mother, led by her own attendant, Diana Brancaccio, all bearing lights and evidently with a preconcerted object, was in itself sufficiently confounding. But when the whole party proceeded to search the apartment, and actually discovered Capece hidden beneath the bed, the confusion of the duchess became overwhelming. Excuses and explanations, though boldly attempted, were futile and fruitless. Both the delinquents were placed in strict custody until the morning, when the duke was formally

made acquainted with the events of the preceding night, and he hastened from Soriano to the scene of their discovery. A family inquiry was now held into all the circumstances of the case, which ought rather to have formed the subject of a judicial investigation than of a mere private examination. The depositions of all the witnesses were taken by the duke himself, the chief testimony being that of the implacable Brancaccio, herself the chief architect of the fabric of guilt and fraud which in the end fell so ruinously upon all who had assisted in building it.

It must be fairly admitted that the duke did not too readily believe the worst, but endeavoured to find some pretext for the nocturnal visit of Capece which might save the honour of his house and the reputation of his wretched wife. But every theory of innocence failed before the accumulated evidence of the many witnesses of the scene, and especially that of Brancaccio, bent upon the destruction of her

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now utterly helpless victim. Convinced at last by their testimony, associating with himself the Count of Alife, the duchess's brother, and Giovanni Toraldo, his sister's husband, he examined Marcello Capece in the prison of Soriano, where he was confined. At first he resolutely denied his guilt, though tortured to force a confession. But when Diana Brancaccio was confronted with him, stung to the quick by the shamelessness and malignity of her evidence, and the vindictiveness with which she carried out to the very last her part in the terrible drama, he boldly confessed the truth, and denounced her as the author and instigator of his guilt, revealing all the schemes and artifices by which she had lured the duchess and himself to the doom now inevitably impending. This bitter but fruitless recrimination closed with a scene too hideous to depict in all the details with which the author of our manuscript presents it to his readers. Let it suffice to say that, falling like a tiger on his helpless prey

and savagely wounding him with his teeth, the duke made him write the confession of his guilt in his own blood, in the few but sufficient words, "Si, che io sono traditore del mio Signore." "Si, che io ò tolto l'onore." The dagger, that ready weapon of death in the hand alike of the prince and the brigand in a country where homicide had long been almost an institution, soon closed the life of the wretched culprit. In vain he prayed to be permitted to confess himself before his death. The reply of the ducal executioner was worthy of his murderous deed: "As he had robbed him of his honour, he was resolved that, demon as he was, he should lose soul and body together." \*

Turning to Brancaccio, who stood already

\* The Roman jurists (cited and approved by Farinacci) justify murders under similar circumstances, "*Ob justam iram et justum dolorem quo sic ad occidendum commoventur*" ("Theoric. Crim.," tom. i. qu. 91). But even this lax doctrine would hardly apply to murders in cold blood like those which are here described. It accounts, however, for the faint impression left upon the public mind by these horrible murders.

almost in the chill of death, he exclaimed, "Guilty woman, unworthy of the nobility of your blood (*Rea femina, indegna di esser nata di nobil sangue*), it is just that you should pay the penalty of your treason." Seizing her by the hair, with a single stroke of the dagger he laid her dead at his feet.

Passing from this scene of horror to the chamber in which his wife was confined, he took with him Leonardo Cardines and the Count of Alife, to whom, with a refinement of cruelty almost unparalleled in the history of crime, he deputed and enjoined the task of murdering his own sister. Here a spectacle scarcely less revolting in its outward features, and even more painful and saddening in its moral aspect, presented itself. Two Capuchin friars accompanied the murderers,\* and to them the duchess

\* One of these eye-witnesses, cited by Duruy (p. 316), narrates the hideous murder as though it were the ordinary and legal execution of a criminal. He simply expresses the homicidal *sang-froid* of his age and race.

appealed in her agony for that mercy which they were powerless to grant. She prayed them not to abandon her in this terrible emergency, for which, nevertheless, she had prepared her soul. She had but short shrift and a very speedy release from a life of guilt and misery, being strangled by her own brother by the order of her husband—united in this dreadful deed, as they were afterwards in its righteous penalty.

Our author affirms that Cardinal Caraffa, though not present at these scenes of murder, was the chief instigator of them. He is alleged to have even sent a knife to his brother with the charge to wipe out with it, in the blood of the duchess, the dishonour she had brought on their house. The companion of his brother in the crimes of his earlier years, he associated himself too naturally with him in the crowning guilt of his life. On the receipt of this sanguinary letter the duke referred it to Leonardo de Cardines and the Count of Alife, whom the

cardinal threatened with the ruin of all his most important affairs, unless he at once became an agent in this work of murder.\*

The news of the death of the duchess and of the murders which preceded it transpired but slowly, for the solitude of the scene of them and the recurrence of conflicting rumours prevented it from being spread abroad until many days after the event. At length, however, the whole truth became known, and among the first to obtain authentic intelligence of it was the pope himself. Upon hearing it, he was seized with such a fit of indignation and transport of passion that it hastened his death, which happened on the 18th of August, 1559.†

\* It is only fair to add that the cardinal insisted on his innocence in regard to the murder of the duchess. But as he was (according to the saying of the pope, his uncle) steeped in blood, and had been guilty of many murders, the charge of complicity in this is probably but too well founded.

† He is said to have exclaimed, when he heard of the murders of Capece and Brancaccio from the Cardinal of Naples (Alfonso Caraffa), "And what about the duke's

wife?" (*Quid actum de Ducis Conjuge?*). Words (as the contemporary historian Nares informs us) were held by some to mean, "Why was not the duchess put to death too?" (*Duruy*, p. 316). He fell soon after into that fever which closed his life, and which was probably hastened by the fit of indignation which is here alleged.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE TRIAL OF THE CARAFFA, ON THE ACCES- SION OF PIUS IV.

THE death of Pope Paul IV., coming so unexpectedly, occasioned the greatest disturbances in the city of Rome, and no sooner was the news spread through the city than the whole people rose in tumult, and with such rage and fury that they broke into the prisons of the Borgo, of the Torre Savella, and, lastly, into that of the Inquisition, which was situated in the street near to the Ripetta, where they committed great outrages, threatening to throw the monks out of the windows, and freeing all the prisoners of the Inquisition, who took to flight. Among these was a heretical leader

named Pietro della Mastillara, who went by the nickname of Paleogo.

One saw with amazement all the crowd of the people destroying with iron weapons all the memorials of Paul IV., sacking and firing the palace of the Cardinal del Monte,\* and serving in like manner the houses of others who were friends and partisans of the Caraffa, and with such unbridled fury as to betray no fear whatever of the action of the law. They proceeded to the capitol, where stood the statue which had been raised to Paul IV. by the people and senate of Rome, and, having placed a halter on its neck, threw it down from the pedestal, and with vile cries and shoutings drew it along the Piazza del Campidoglio, whither the mob followed it, striking it with stones and sticks so shamefully that, being joined by a wicked faithless and iniquitous

\* He was nephew of Pope Julius III., and from his alleged complicity with the Caraffa was imprisoned in St. Angelo, and only released at the earnest intercession of the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

Jew who had in his hand an iron hammer, the head was struck off from the bust.\* The reason of a Jew thus daring to outrage that venerable head was to revenge himself on Paul IV., who had confined the Jews to the district called the Ghetto (for before this time they had been dispersed throughout the city), and made them wear the badge of a yellow veil on their hats.

The cardinals, when they found that the first ardour of the mob was cooled, published a decree of death against all who should commit such outrages. This was done before they entered into the conclave for the creation of the new pontiff. And as some of

\* The history of this statue in a later day was very curious and suggestive. The torso to which it was reduced by the populace was buried near the Capitol, and dug up in 1645, when it was proposed to raise a statue in honour of Innocent X. To the headless and handless trunk, the head and hands of the late pope were affixed—a somewhat grotesque combination. This, however, appears to have been only a temporary arrangement, as an entire statue of Innocent X. was afterwards made by Algardi (Ciampi, "Innocenzo X. e la sua Corte," p. 311).

the ringleaders had conspired against Cardinal Caraffa, with a view of attacking him when he entered Rome to come to the conclave, the Sacred College discovering the plot, sent him a hundred and fifty soldiers to protect him, which freed him from any danger that might threaten him in the conclave. Otherwise there is no doubt that he would have been killed by the people, who were exasperated against him to the last degree. While the cardinals were in the conclave, Marco Antonio Colonna, with a large force, repossessed himself of all the States which the late pontiff had deprived him of; and the Sacred College sent the Bishop of Tivoli to him, praying him to desist and withdraw his soldiers, and leave the States of the Church in peace and quiet, which was punctually accomplished.

After four months of the conclave, during which the greatest discords arose among the cardinals, through the exertions and influence of Cardinal Caraffa, and by means of his

creatures, the Cardinal Giovanni Angelo de' Medici, a Milanese, brother of Giovanni Giacomo Marquis of Marignano, a distinguished and valorous captain, was raised to the supreme dignity.\* The new pontiff assumed the name of Pius IV., and when he had set the affairs of the Church and State, and specially Rome itself, in order—for during the long vacancy of the see they had fallen into confusion,—he immediately gave directions that the Cardinals Carlo and Alfonso Caraffa should be imprisoned and had them apprehended in the very consistory itself. The Duke Don Giovanni Caraffa, Don Leonardo de Cardines, and the Count of Alife, who had arrived in Rome but a few days

\* Though he adopted their historic name, he had no claim to be considered a member of the great Florentine family of Medici, his proper name being Medichini, and his father, Bernardinus, a tax-collector. The contemporary historian, Beaucaire, says, "*Ob nominis similitudinem se Mediceum appellari voluit, et a Florentinis Mediceis oriundum jactavit.*" ("*Rer. Gall.*" l. 28, n. 39.) He has no place in the full pedigree of the Medici family as it is given in the "*Storia del Granducato*" of Galluzzi.

before, were also taken into custody ; and the same fate would have fallen upon Don Antonio Caraffa, marquis of Montebello, and Don Diomedé, the son of the duke, but they had some days before retired to Naples.

At such an unexpected incident, Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, suspecting the untoward event, repented too late having promoted the election of Pius IV. and not having taken advantage of the advice given him by Cardinal Farnese, often sadly lamenting having deceived himself thus. For that cardinal had, during the closure of the conclave, exhorted him to induce his partisans to concur in the election of himself (Farnese) to the pontificate, saying that he would then have a great friend in that dignity to defend him from his powerful enemies, of which he had many ; and would be strengthened through the interests of his house, connected as was the Duke (of Parma) his brother with the Catholic king. But against the power of destiny the counsels of prudence avail but little ; and allured by

vain chimeras and fallacious promises, he joined with his adherents in the choice of the Cardinal de' Medici.

The same Cardinal Farnese, when leaving the conclave after the election of Pius IV., taking the hand of Cardinal Caraffa, told him that he predicted that such an election would be very unfortunate to him, and urged him as a true friend to absent himself from Rome during the coming pontificate.

The departure out of the reach of those in authority is the best remedy for those who fear compulsory measures ; and as the adoption of wise and prudent counsel enables one to escape every storm, so the neglect of it involves an evident danger. But perhaps God, whose wrath does not run hastily, but compensates for its delay by the severity of its punishment, willed to punish him for his misdeeds, suffering him to take this counsel in another spirit, and thus to stumble on to his destruction.

Following up the imprisonment of the Caraffa,

the pope ordered the Fiscal Alessandro Palentieri, a Milanese, to draw up a rigorous indictment against them, which was interspersed with the evidence of many witnesses in order to verify it in all its details. The summary, or brief, of the accusation was as follows\* :—

#### EPITOME OF THE PROCESS.

I. The cardinal was first accused of having, in company with Girolamo Contobernia, slain, in the kingdom of Naples, Tommaso Pennachioni of Benevento—in proof of which crime twenty-four witnesses had deposed before the fiscal. On this head the cardinal rejoined that the witnesses had been examined without a due citation of the parties, and that their evidence was from hearsay, and therefore not legally

\* In the “*Nova Scriptorum Collectio*” of C. G. Hoffmann (Lips. 1731) a vindication of Cardinal Caraffa from eleven of these charges is to be found. In the twelfth and crowning one, no absolution of him is attempted even by Pius V., the restorer of his name and of what remained of his property.

proved ; and that even if the murder had been proved, he could not be tried for it, on account of the plenary absolution given him *de motu proprio* by the pope, his uncle.\*

II. The cardinal, together with his brother, Don Giovanni, was accused of having unjustly condemned to death the Abate Nanni, under the pretence that he was conspiring to poison him, though the *corpus delicti* was not proved, but only the simple statement of a soldier who had deposed that the Abate Nanni came to Rome in order to poison some great cardinal, who was supposed to be Cardinal Caraffa ; on which matter the fiscal having established the innocence of the Abate, concluded the cardinal and his brother guilty of that crime.

III. The third charge was that of defrauding the soldiery, it being urged that the accused had embezzled the pay of the soldiers during the war, on which account the army was defeated

\* This astounding document is given in full by Duruy, in an appendix to his "Life of Cardinal Caraffa."

by the Spaniards and Imperialists, and the Apostolic Chamber defrauded and reduced to the greatest straits.

IV. They were also charged with having, by deceit and under false pretexts, induced the pope, their uncle, to take arms and make war against the Spaniards and Imperialists, which the fiscal proved by means of letters addressed to King Henry II. of France, to whom they had made known the facility with which he could obtain by such an undertaking the kingdom of Naples and the State of Milan.

V. The cardinal was accused further of having himself killed Mgre. Fumantio, an officer (*banderaro*) of the palace, by throwing him down the staircase of the Vatican, the eye-witnesses deposing thereto being certain servants of the Duke of Palliano and of the cardinal himself, who were examined by the fiscal—although two of these deposed that the fall was accidental, and that the cardinal himself had proved it to have been so.

VI. They were charged with having themselves ordered the death of a soldier in Corsica, on the supposition that he had slandered them, and five witnesses were produced on the part of the fiscal, to prove the said murder.

VII. It was proved against them, before the fiscal on the testimony of eighteen witnesses, that the cardinal and his brother, for their assistance in the war, had invited to Rome the Margrave Albert of Brandenburg, to treat with them for an armed league against the Emperor Charles V., in order that he might be assailed by the Ottoman army. On the part of the fiscal two witnesses were examined, who proved that they had seen the cardinal and Don Giovanni, his brother, in secret meetings with the Margrave Albert, and that they had received him at the Apostolic palace, and treated with him with the greatest confidence and familiarity. The fiscal proved the military convention by means of a letter written by Annibale Rucellai in the name of the cardinal.

VIII. They were also accused of making a secret treaty without the knowledge of Paul IV., an accusation which was rendered more manifest and notorious than the others. Paul IV. had designed to annex the State of Palliano to the Apostolic Chamber, although he had given it to Don Giovanni Caraffa, and had often said to the cardinal that he had determined that the State of Palliano should never in any manner be restored to Marco Antonio Colonna ; and therefore in the conditions of peace the pope resolved to treat the matters relating to the Colonna separately, with the ambassador of the emperor. But the cardinal and his brother, to ingratiate themselves with the King of Spain, and to obtain from him as a recompense the territories of Oderisi and Francavilla in the kingdom of Naples, did not carry out the commission of the pope, and restored Palliano to Marco Antonio Colonna. At this the pope, their uncle, exhibited the greatest indignation ; and the fiscal pretended that it was a very

grave crime. This was therefore included in the charges of the process.

IX. The fiscal also alleged that they were guilty of having made a truce with the Duke of Alva, at the time when the Duke of Guise had a rupture with the general of the Church on the question of precedence, and when there was a prospect of victory through the arrival of the Gascons, the army of the enemy being then inferior in strength. The pope desired therefore that, instead of entering into a truce, they should have proceeded to action; and all the more, because they had been joined in the Papal States by the forces of the Dukes of Urbino and of Ferrara. By reason of this truce Marco Antonio Colonna had reinforced his position in Itri by soldiers drawn out of Naples, so that the Caraffa were a chief cause of the ruin and break-up of the army of the States of the Church.

X. Further, they were accused in the matter of the restoration of the galleys at Cività

Vecchia, which were taken for the Alemanni,\* of having acted in this on their own authority, without the knowledge of the pope, who on differences arising would not have opposed himself to it, and that because the pope, their uncle, had strongly pledged himself. But for this, there would not have followed the imprisonment of the chamberlain, nor would the pope have been always more and more inflamed against the servants (?) of the house of Santa Fiora, nor proceeded against the chamberlain imprisoned in the castle, nor would the greater disputes between the pope and the emperor have ensued.

XI. They were further accused of the imposition of certain burdens on the Roman people, and on the subjects of the Church ; Paul

\* Our author writes, "levate agli Alemanni," as though he meant "taken for the Germans," apparently mistaking the name of an individual for that of a nation. In one sense they may be said to have been taken for the Germans, as the Sforza with their agent Alamanni had gone over to the Imperialists. (*Vide* "Palat. in vitâ Card. Caraffæ.")

IV., after the exile of his nephews, having declared in the public consistory that the said imposts were laid on without his knowledge, adding that his nephews would assuredly be punished by his successor; and the more fully to establish their guilt, it was alleged in the process that the Bishop of Bergamo had thought it necessary, in conjunction with Gianfigliacci to reveal to the pope all the misdeeds and enormities of the cardinal and his brothers; and that the pope, in the presence of several of the cardinals, had declared his nephews to be worthy of punishment and that he determined to exile them from Rome—which he did. It was added that hardly had the Pope complained of all this, than in a congregation of the Inquisition, he uttered many expressions of sorrow, lamenting with the cardinals that in the course of his pontificate he had been silent and concealed from himself the great enormities of his nephews.

XII. Finally, they were declared guilty of

the murder of Marcello Capece, and of the Duchess of Palliano, and Diana Brancaccio, as we have already described,\* and also of having, in company with Leonardo de Cardines and the Count of Alife, been guilty of public and private outrages, violated many Roman ladies, broken into the sacred precincts of nunneries and outraged their inmates; committed many murders, retained by force property belonging to others, and a thousand other enormities too horrible to relate.

When the Fiscal Alessandro Palantieri had ended this voluminous indictment, he presented it to Pius IV., who, having read it, made many reflections upon every charge, and remained in great doubt whether he ought to proceed to the capital sentence. Considering that he was elected by the creatures of Paul IV., brought

\* In the indictment against Palentieri under Pius V. it was alleged that no mention was made, under this head, of the adultery of the duchess, which some of the biographers of the cardinal seem to think would have led to the mitigation of the sentence. ("Palatii in vita Card.")

round in his favour by Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, he first leaned towards a sentence which should save their lives. But the pope did not remain long in this mind. Assailed with a perfect tempest of opposition against such a resolution,\* he was led by new considerations to alter his view, a result which was said to have arisen from the constant influences which were brought to bear on him by the ambassadors of the most Catholic king, against the Caraffa, and his demands on the part of his king for the restitution of Palliano to Marco Antonio Colonna, it being absolutely unreasonable that that prince should have been deprived of all his inheritance ; and with this pretext they ceased not in secret, by insidious influences, to instigate the pope to the punishment of the cardinal and his brother, asserting that they were the means of inducing

\* If the unanimity of the cardinals here indicated was so great, the silence imposed on them in regard to the sentence itself, as alleged by Ciaconius, would seem to have been unnecessary.

the pope, their uncle, by divers stratagems and deceits, to make a league with the King of France against the Catholic king and the Emperor Charles V., in order to deprive him of the kingdom of Naples and the State of Lombardy. Nevertheless, it was well known to Pope Pius IV. that these events were occasioned by the absolute will of Pope Paul, and not by his relations, on account of his being naturally of a rigid nature and ill-disposed towards the Spaniards. For he himself remembered telling the Venetian ambassador, as he came out of the conclave,\* that Paul IV. that morning, agitated with rage, had burst forth into such injurious exclamations against the emperor and the Catholic king, that he was led to the firm belief that he would declare war against them. The disposition of Paul was therefore well known to Pope Pius from his having spoken many times in this sense, and to such a degree, that when they were both

\* Consistory ?

cardinals he declared that his great aim and desire was to see a King of Naples and a Duke of Milan who should be both Italians, and to drive away the Ultramontanes. Hence the pope might judge that his predecessor would not have neglected even the least opportunity he might have had to put his design into execution. This being the case, there can be no doubt that the mind of Pius was greatly agitated, as he desired to gratify the Catholic king, and also to induce him at the same time to advance his nephews. The monarchical interest in the world removes God from the hearts of most men, and steels them against every sentiment of faith or influence of reason.\* Perhaps Pius IV. flattered himself with the belief that by the restitution of Palliano he might obtain the recompense for his relations, which afterwards happened, when, in exchange for that territory, he received from the Catholic

\* This remark almost suggests the belief that our author was an exiled Florentine or a Venetian.

king Oderisi and Francavilla in the kingdom of Naples.

He knew, as we have said before, that he was indebted to the house of Caraffa, in consequence of Cardinal Caraffa's bringing round to his side in the conclave all his own creatures, and that this was the effectual cause of his obtaining the papacy. On this ground, according to reports which may be true or false, he was for many days in suspense as to how he ought to act. He was biased and exhorted by Cardinal Morone, his confidential friend and near kinsman,\* whose influence prevailed greatly with him, to make a severe example of the

\* Morone was cast into the prison of the Inquisition by Paul IV., on the mere suspicion of heresy, where he was kept until the death of that pope. He was released by the cardinals, and took part in the conclave which elected his relative Pius IV., who, after an examination of the charges, had him released, and quashed all the proceedings against him. He was afterwards president of the Council of Trent. Cardinal Pole was under the same charge, and, but for his vigorous defence by his cousin, Queen Mary, would have incurred the same indignity.

brothers Caraffa. For Morone was their irreconcilable enemy from the circumstance that their uncle, Paul IV., acting upon a mere groundless suspicion in regard to matters concerning the holy office, had imprisoned him in the Castle of St. Angelo for many days, and for no other reason, it was said, than to deprive him of every hope of the papacy.\*

The great, when offended, never lose an opportunity of revenge, holding that any one who does not show resentment for injuries, gives a proof that he has deserved them. And now the representation of an Italian prince

\* There can be no doubt that this determination to make Morone ineligible for the papacy inspired the otherwise inexplicable provision of the Bull "*Cum ex Apostolatûs Officio*" (the work of Cardinal Caraffa when he was at the height of his power, February, 1558), in which every one suspected of heresy is disqualified for the papacy, however unanimously elected; and all his acts, even after the assumption of the office, invalidated. The absurdity of the enactment of such a law, in the absence of any tribunal to carry it into effect, must be apparent. The former portion of this bull was as plainly directed by Paul IV. against the emperor, as the latter was by his nephew against Morone.

was not wanting in influencing the pope to arrive at the death sentence in the case of the Caraffa—that prince being the Duke of Florence, who received the State of Siena, and obtained it during the reign of Pope Pius IV., a Medici, who was most ungrateful herein to the house of Caraffa, which had brought about his election to the papacy by their suffrages.

A man who knows how to hide his snares, easily fabricates stratagems to overthrow another's greatness. Hence, for the reasons already given, the new pope began to contrive reasons altogether different from those to which gratitude had bound him, hiding in his inmost heart the hatred he felt at seeing any one to whom he was under an obligation. He was still further induced to carry out his new plan by his anxiety to please the Catholic king, by whom he was bound, as he thought, by a slender tie; although Cardinal Bellay mentions, in one of his manuscript works, that he had had it from the mouth of the pope himself, that "he came

to his decision most reluctantly, and that in all his life he had never had so distressing an event as this judgment. He would have sanctioned a lighter penalty, if he could have done so without breaking the laws ; but it was necessary to give the relations of future pontiffs an example of this kind, to teach them how they ought to conduct themselves in such a high position."

The pope, having finally resolved to pronounce their condemnation, for the reasons already related, on the 13th of March, 1562, in a secret consistory, ordered that the cause of the Caraffa should be referred to him by the Governor of Rome ; on which relation, from four o'clock in the morning until one o'clock on the following morning, he presided at a commission consisting of seven cardinals, whose names were as follows :— \*

\* Though this was a merely fictitious tribunal, as Ciaconius indicates, it was ingeniously constructed to represent various interests and nationalities. We have

1. Cardinal Bartolomeo della Queva,\* of the title of St. Mark.

2. Cardinal Federico Cesi, Bishop of Todi.

3. Cardinal Giov. Batt. Cicada, of Genoa, of the title of St. Clement.

4. Cardinal Fra Clemente (Michele?) Ghislieri Alessandrino, Bishop of Nepi and Sutri, of the title of S. Maria sopra Minerva; who afterwards was Pope Pius V.

5. Cardinal Giov. Bertrando (a Frenchman), of the title of St. Prisca.†

6. Cardinal Luigi Cornaro, of Venice, of the title of St. Theodore.‡

here—1. A Spaniard; 2. A client of the Medici; 3. A Genoese; 4. A Lombard; 5. A Frenchman; 6. A Venetian; 7. A prince of Urbino: the nominal president being Cardinal Cicada, who had acted successfully for Pius IV. when cardinal, in a civil suit, and who was, therefore, very well prepared to support him in this parody of justice.

\* More properly, Cueva, a member of the family of the Dukes of Albuquerque.

† Joannes Bertrandus de Trosin, of Toulouse, Archbishop of Sens.

‡ Of the illustrious Venetian house of the Cornelli (or Cornara), who had a kind of regal authority in Cyprus.

7. Cardinal Guilio del Rovere, of the house of Urbino, of the title of St. Peter in Vinculo.

The pope himself pronounced the sentence in which it was decreed that Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, the Duke Don Giovanni, his brother, the Count of Alife and Don Leonardo de Cardines should be delivered over to the secular power, the family of Caraffa being declared thereafter incapable of holding any dignities or honours; and he willed that all should pass through the hands of the minister of justice, who was to see that the cardinal was strangled in the Castle of St. Angelo, and all the others beheaded in the prisons of the Tordinone, which sentence was fully carried out.

We may say, in a word, that fortune, the times, and the Court changed in a moment. Nevertheless, Ciaconius, in his "Elogia," \* relates

\* The well-known work of Ciaccone (Ciaconius), the "Lives of the Popes and Cardinals," was published for the first time in 1601. But probably the reference here is to some separate work, having the title given by our author, which may have existed in manuscript in Rome

that this sentence was promulgated in the presence of seven princes of the Church, but that no one was permitted to say a word, or to utter his own sentiments in regard to it.

or elsewhere. Ciaconius died in 1599, the year of the Cenci tragedy.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE LAST HOURS OF THE CARDINAL.

IN the early part of the morning preceding the last day of March, the anniversary of the day and month in which Don Carlo Caraffa was made cardinal but five years before—at five o'clock two officers of police, one named Lattanza and the other Gasperino, betook themselves to the Castle of St. Angelo, and, presenting the warrant of the pope to the governor, received from him the keys of the ward in which the cardinal was imprisoned and having opened the gates to which they had obtained admittance, accompanied by two lieutenants and an executioner bearing lighted torches, roused up the attendants and soldiers

on guard (who occupied the antechamber) by their sudden appearance. They rose up immediately, and, procuring a light from the chamberlain, Fabio Orsini, followed by the two officers entered the apartment where the cardinal was still lying in bed and sleeping. Rousing himself up, he asked how was it that the police had arrived at such an hour? They earnestly demanded to speak with him by order of his Holiness. Then, foreseeing the fatal event, he said with a sigh, "What may this be?"

At that moment Gasperino, approaching him and saluting him, said these words: "It grieves me not a little, monsignore, to be the bearer of ill news; but his Holiness has given orders that you must die."

At which unexpected announcement, with knitted brow and pallor coming on his cheeks, he replied: "And have I indeed to die?"

"Yes, monsignore," rejoined the other, "and for that reason we are ordered to the castle. It becomes you to be patient, and to commend

yourself to God in the brief season that remains."

The cardinal remained for a short space immovable and speechless on hearing this reply. While dressing he stood in the middle of the chamber, and remained there for a space unmoved as if a statue ; and when they gave him the water to bathe his face he desired to refresh his mouth with it, dried as it was and scarcely able to articulate. Then, turning to the chamberlain, he said, "The Fiscal Palantieri and the Governor of Rome will now have their hearts' content." Putting on then a cassock of purple velvet, he asked for his cardinalitial biretta ; but when the attendant was giving it him, and the cardinal was standing ready to take it, Gasperino came forward, saying that that must be dispensed with, since his Holiness had deprived him of that dignity. To which announcement he replied, with a sigh, "Patience! and is even this added? (Pazienza! anche questo?)" And asking for a cap, there was given him one belonging to a

servant of his own ; and thus covered, and robed in a mantle of fur, he completed his dress. Manacles of iron were then placed upon his arms. Then, turning to one of the soldiers who had been appointed to guard him, he courteously begged him to go in his name to pray the castellan to come to him, as he desired greatly to speak with him. On receiving this message the governor failed not to come immediately. When he entered the chamber, the cardinal scarcely saw him before he ran to him and threw himself at his feet, entreating his pardon for every error he had committed and for every injury he had ever done him. The cavaliere, unable to bear such a scene, raised him up immediately, and said to him, "To me, monsignore, this act of humility is in no manner due. I know too well, and cannot deny, that you have always borne true friendship and service towards me." At a sign given by the cardinal the servants withdrew to the back of the apartment, and he began to walk to and fro with

the governor, discoursing with him secretly—a conversation whose subject no one was able to discover.

The griefs of the great seldom find utterance, but are hidden in the secret recesses of the heart ; all that the cardinal was heard to say, and that with a loud voice, which seemed intended to be audible to all present, was this utterance—"I have considered over and over again what I could have done to offend his Holiness, and as far as my own thoughts could assist me, I have not found anything. I can recollect this alone, that I have, on the other hand, served him faithfully at all times and under every circumstance. And therefore I pray you, Signor Castellan, as far as I know and am able, to make him understand this after my death." Having finished this appeal, they embraced, and mutually asked pardon of one another. The castellan, bathing his cheeks with his tears, took leave of him ; and the cardinal, thinking apparently that at this time

they would lead him out of the castle, turning to the ministers of justice, said, "Let us then go, my friends ; I am now ready."

But Gasperino replied, "Monsignore, I have to tell you that we are not to leave this place."

The cardinal, altogether astounded and confused, rejoined, "What! have we not to leave this? And can it be that here in this chamber, unseen by any one, I have to die? And am I not allowed space to confess myself?"

"Yes, monsignore," replied the other, "you will be allowed to confess ; and to this end we have brought with us this Priest"—who was presently introduced into the chamber.

The cardinal looked at him, and, after some consideration, said, "I believe and am sure that this is an excellent priest, and a competent confessor ; nevertheless, I could never have believed or imagined that, in the last moments of my life, the privilege of choosing my own spiritual Father would have been denied me." He made earnest entreaties to this effect, and

sent to pray the castellan' himself, who returned answer that he was unable to serve him in this matter, as his Holiness had not granted him any other power than to deliver his person to the police, and, having done this, all his authority was at an end, and he trusted that he would excuse him for not promoting the object he desired.

\* [The confession was long and painfully protracted, the cardinal detailing at length the sins of his life. When an hour had been thus occupied, the impatient Gasperino broke in upon the painful scene with the exclamation, "Monsignore, limit yourself, for we have no time to lose." Appeals for pity were vain in such a quarter, and, though a short reprieve was granted, the executioner returned speedily in still severer mood, declaring that his work was appointed for a certain time, and could not be longer suspended. At last the confession was completed,

\* The passage between brackets has been condensed from the diffuse form it has in the original.

and the fatal moment arrived. Turning to the executioners, the cardinal said, "My friends, fulfil the office imposed upon you. I await your sign." Then, taking the crucifix in his hand, he commended himself to the infinite mercy of the Redeemer, praying Him to be with him in this great extremity, and to enable him to attain to His eternal glory. The fatal cord was then placed round his neck, and the executioners, as inexpert in their revolting work as they were brutal in the words with which they prefaced it to their unhappy victim, failed in their first effort, and the cardinal, who had commended his soul to God in the prayer, "*Domine Jesu Christe accipe spiritum meum: in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum,*" fell forward from his seat. The cord had broken, and the sufferer was doomed to prolong for more than half an hour a scene which was a prelude of death more terrible than death itself. The second attempt was instantaneous in its effect, and a life which in its days of prosperity had awakened every

bitterest feeling of hatred and even horror, inspired at its close a universal sentiment of amazement and sorrow. The retribution was too sudden and terrible to enable any one, without pity and grief, to look upon a prince of the Church passing into the hands of the executioner, spoiled of his purple robe, wrapped in a common sheet, and borne to the Church of Sta. Maria Traspontina, beside the pulpit of which his body received a mean burial. From thence it was afterwards removed by Pope Pius V., and buried in a chapel belonging to the Caraffa in the Church of Sta. Maria sopra Minerva, with a pomp suitable to his high degree, *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*.]

Thus closed the life of a prince, who for full five years was the absolute patron and arbiter of the government of the Church.\* When sent

\* He had at first adopted the profession of arms, and served under the emperor, from whom, on some offence being given him, or taken, he passed into the service of Ottavio Farnese, and then into that of France. ("Serristori Legazioni" (Firenze, 1853), p. 360, note.)

by Paul IV. as his legate *à latere* to Spain and France, he was received with the greatest honour and applause by both monarchs. In the heat of the war he was declared Legate of the Holy Church in Italy and at his intercession the pope, his uncle, promoted several to the dignity of cardinal. He had, moreover, by means of his creatures, raised to the pontifical throne the very pope who condemned him, becoming, as it were, the laughing-stock of fortune. For presently the sentence of death was declared against him by the minister of justice, and he was made to pass into another life, when he least expected it, scarce a few hours' time being granted him to make his peace with God—a respite given even to the basest of malefactors.

Pope Pius had charged and commanded the castellan that, at the very moment in which the death of Cardinal Caraffa occurred, the execution should be announced to him by the exhibition of a lighted torch on the wall of the

castle. To the surprise and amazement of the domestics of the Vatican, who knew nothing of this order, the pope was seen by them walking through the apartments at an unusual hour, opening the window, and looking towards the Castle of St. Angelo, to recognize the sign. When he had seen it, he ordered refreshments to be brought him, saying these precise words : “ *Laqueus contritus est et nos liberati sumus !* ” and then sat down to his meal.\*

\* The hours mentioned in the manuscript are so difficult to reconcile, that they are here given only in a general form.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE EXTINCTION OF THE PAPAL BRANCH  
OF THE CARAFFA.

AT the same time in which the cardinal was put to death in the castle, the announcement of the sentence of death was made to the Duke of Palliano, who, foreseeing the grievous crisis he had to go through, received it with a joyful and tranquil spirit, in no wise terrified at the sad and mournful intelligence.\* He prepared

\* The duke had been twice tortured, and on the second occasion confessed that he had been deceived throughout by his brother the cardinal, and attributed all his guilt to him. His protest against the indignity to which he was thus exposed on the ground of his relationship to the pope and his bearing four royal quarterings, reads strangely and suggestively to those of another age. These I apprehend to be the coats of Austria, Anjou, Aragon, and Scotland (the Cantelmi).

himself for death with a ready mind, without giving the least token of grief, and wished to close his life as a cavalier and a prince, recommending his vassals to the Marquis of Montebello, and enjoining him to keep them well-affectioned to him by kind treatment, and not to burden them in any way, giving him every counsel of an affectionate brother. Withdrawing himself from every thought of this world, and applying himself to heavenly things, he ordered Nepi, his faithful servant, to prevent him from experiencing any interruption, as he felt obliged, on account of his soul, to occupy himself in meditating upon the most sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he refused accordingly to hear any one ; and thus, with the crucifix in his hand, he applied himself with all humility to this meditation.

He gave to his spiritual Father the robe that was given him by the King of France, in order that he might have some memorial of him when reciting prayers in the sacrifice of the

holy mass for the relief of his soul, which he charged him to do with the profoundest humility. Before he went to execution he wrote a letter of much feeling and tenderness to Don Diomede, his son, in which he exhorted him to live as a good Christian, and to obey his king, keeping before him as an inducement his own miserable end. He urged him to be loving to his dependents, and just towards them all, and above all to be courageous under the stroke of their cruel misfortune ; and, finally, he gave him his benediction.\*

He wrote also other letters to his relatives at Naples, and desired them to ask pardon of the pope, and withal to beg his absolution for certain secret matters written by his hand, a favour which he easily obtained. He left to his four servants their respective salaries during their life, and to Giovanni da Nepi, his old

\* This letter, which is beautiful and touching, is given in full by Aldimari, in his short biography of the Duke. ("Geneal. di Casa Carafa," tom. ii. p. 133.)

servant, beyond his pay during life, all the clothes which he had with him in the prison.

The executioner was lodged in the same prison, to which the greater part of the Roman barons went, unable to restrain their tears at the spectacle of constancy exhibited by this cavaliere, and at the humility with which he prepared himself for death. The fatal event speedily followed, and the body was carried to the Piazza di Ponte, where it remained till the evening, when it was borne to the church of the Traspontina, and there meanly buried,\* the burial service being celebrated on the following morning with the least possible ceremony (*con vilissima pompa*).

Don Leonardo de Cardines and the Count

\* Palatius adds, that the common pall which was thrown over his body was adorned with the arms of his father and mother, Caraffa and Cantelmo, the latter being the royal arms of Scotland, borne by the Cantelmi in virtue of their descent from its ancient kings—a contrast of grandeur and degradation, which was the appropriate symbol of a life as noble in its origin as it was inglorious in its end.

of Alife embraced the sentence of death with supreme resignation, sustaining their fate with great constancy and confidence in the Divine mercy.

When their miserable fate transpired in the city of Rome, it occasioned in every one a mingled feeling of amazement and terror—no one heard it without compassion. Perhaps in the very same degree that prosperity is the object of admiration, the fall from it is viewed with horror and a stunning feeling of amazement. There was no one, however envious of their greatness, who was not afflicted at their unhappy end. Envy dies with the death of its object ; it is a serpent which does not approach a corpse. In order to show himself in some sort clement towards the family of Caraffa, Pius IV. exempted from the same penalty the Cardinal Don Alfonso Caraffa, a young man of great purity of conduct and stainless life, and who was in little or nothing mixed up with the government in the time of Paul IV., whose

great-nephew he was, being the son of the Marquis of Montebello. But although he spared his life, he did not altogether pardon him, condemning him to pay 100,000 scudi to the Apostolic Chamber, as a recompense for certain jewels which were not forthcoming after the death of Paul IV., and the abstraction of a portion of which was charged against him by the Fiscal Palantieri. But this was commonly believed to be a mere suspicion; and as the cardinal was not able to make up so large a sum, in consequence of the liberal almsgiving he carried on among the poor, the pope ordered him to pay before he left the sum of 25,000 scudi, the other 75,000 remaining at interest, good and sufficient security for the same being given to the Apostolic Chamber. The pope took from him also the office of chamberlain, which Paul IV. had conferred on him, and the other abbeys and benefices, which increased his own revenue at the beginning of the year.

The misfortunes of the Cardinal Alfonso moved many with compassion, for he was yet young, having passed by but a little his twenty-fifth year. He was endowed, moreover, with the greatest prudence, and had led a good and exemplary life, his habits being excellent and virtuous ; and, furthermore, he was not only unable to pay so large a sum as the 100,000 scudi, but could not even give the 25,000 which were required to free him from prison, which was the condition required by the pope. The cardinals, therefore, dividing the sum among themselves, subscribed the 25,000 scudi, and paid it into the Apostolic Chamber, to free him from the imprisonment to which he was still subject.

Further, many of the cardinals offered to become security, some for four, some for five, and some even for ten thousand. The pope accordingly, to remove the suspicion that he was acting unjustly towards the Caraffa, and to show his goodwill towards them, reduced the

sum of 100,000 to 25,000 scudi. But although the cardinal had given all due securities for the satisfaction of his debt, he could not depart from Rome until the Marquis of Montebello, his father, who desired to make him absolutely free, had resolved to sell his property of Summonte, situated in his marquisate, and with the money derived from the sale had satisfied the Apostolic Chamber and freed his son, relieving him from all his obligations, and freeing him from their burden. He left Rome for Naples, of which city he was archbishop, and entered the city on the 25th of October, 1564, on Sunday, at two o'clock in the morning, to escape the honours which many were eager to render him on his entrance into the city.

But the good cardinal saw but little of his native place, for on the 25th of September, 1565, he died, to the grief of the whole city, in the very flower of his age, not having attained his thirtieth year, as may be seen in the

inscription on his tomb, which Pius IV. erected to him, near the high altar of the Cathedral of Naples,—showing his approbation of the innocence, goodness, and admirable life of this cardinal.\*

The Duchy of Palliano was by the same pope, at the instance of Philip II., king of Spain, restored to Marco Antonio Colonna, its ancient lord, from whom (as has been already said) it was taken away by Paul IV. to give to his nephew, Don Giovanni Caraffa.

And to close the present work with the extinction of the Caraffa (Caraffeschi), of the line of Giovanni Alfonso, Count of Montorio, brother of Pope Paul IV., I may add that there remained to the Duke of Palliano one only son, named Diomede, who during the imprisonment and death of his father had retired to Naples,

\* Our author has by an obvious error substituted the name of Pius IV. for that of Pius V., whom Gabutius and his other biographers describe as having given this testimony to the excellent life of the unfortunate Alfonso.

the last scion of that fruitful stem. To save this from fruitlessness he had married, when only seventeen years old, Donna Cornelia Caraffa, sister of another Diomede, Duke of Matalone. By her he had one only son, to whom he gave the name of Alfonso, and who died in his seventeenth year.

This Alfonso, who bore the title of Count of Montorio (mark here the judgment of God!) when he was hardly sixteen was married to Vittoria Caracciola, daughter of the Marquis of Brienza, and had scarce married when, one morning—it was the 24th of March, 1584—walking in the Seggio di Nido towards Santa Chiara, with Ferrante Loffredo, his dear friend, son of the Marquis of Frevico, also a very young man, while they were joking and playing with one another, and one of them was unable to bear the jesting words of the other, they suddenly drew their swords and fell upon each other as though they were the wildest enemies. In the combat Loffredo was struck, and the

wretched Alfonso, count of Montorio, was killed ; without leaving any descendant whatever. On his death, the line of Paul IV. and his branch of the Caraffa became extinct.

THE END.

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